# INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Ralph Farm	Survey	Number: <u>D -</u>	700
Project: <u>Dorchester County Power Plant</u>	Agency:	<u>Delmarva</u>	
Site visit by MHT Staff: X no yes Name		Date	
Eligibility recommended X Eligibility <b>not</b> recom	mmended		
Criteria:AB <u>X</u> CD Considerations:A	_BC	_DE	FGNone
Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if r	necessary	and attach	map)
Set on approximately 147-1/2 acres near Vienna, Maryland is an early to mid-20th-century farm complex which consists outbuildings. Located at the end of tree-lined drive, the fields and retains its historic views and setting. The particles are setting to the process of the pr	s of a pr property	imary resid sits amongs	lence and five

The property on which Ralph Farm is located was originally the home of Thomas Ball; in 1866, Elizabeth Teasdale (nee Ball) and her husband sold the property to Charles T. Ralph. Though subdivided into several smaller tracts, the property has remained in Ralph Family hands since they purchased it in the mid-19th century.

of a small, early 20th-century Eastern shore farm complex and is eligible for listing in the

National Register under criterion C.

he primary residence is an imposing 2-1/2-story, five-bay structure designed as a variation of the American four-square type house with Colonial Revival-style detailing. The house is square in plan and is covered with a pyramidal roof with hipped roof dormers on all four elevations. Colonial Revival-style details include the heavy box cornice and cornice returns, the paired 1/1 windows with flat trim, the tri-partite windows in the dormers, and the single-story porch across the main facade of the house.

The outbuildings, all of which post-date the construction of the main house, are located to the north and northeast of the house and include four contributing resources and one non-contributing resource. The four contribuing resources are: a gable-roofed equipment shed; frame animal barn; shed; a brick bake oven; and a farm office/garage (non-contributing).

The Ralph Farm, including its primary residence and outbuildings, survives as a good, local example of a small farm complex on Maryland's Eastern shore. The house stands as a fine, local example of a variation of an American four-square and a good example of the Colonial Revival style and how it permeated all levels of architecture, from sophisticated urban townhouse and residential dwelling to rural vernacular farmhouse. The property should be included in the National Register under Criterion C, for local significance.

- Muy

Documentation on the property/district is presented in	n:Review and Compliance Files
Preparedby: MAARAssociates	
Beth Hannold	//25/96
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date
NR program concurrence: yes no not ap	pplicable
Culary & Esterity	Ms. 13 1996.
Revie <b>y</b> er, NR program	Date

Survey No.	N# -700

## MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

Ι.	Geographic Region:	
X	Eastern Shore Western Shore Piedmont	<pre>(all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil) (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's) (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)</pre>
	Western Maryland	(Allegany, Garrett and Washington)
II.	Chronological/Developmental Pe	riods:
	Paleo-Indian Early Archaic Middle Archaic Late Archaic Early Woodland Middle Woodland Late Woodland/Archaic Contact and Settlement Rural Agrarian Intensification Agricultural-Industrial Transi Industrial/Urban Dominance Modern Period Unknown Period ( prehisto	tion A.D. 1815-1870 A.D. 1870-1930 A.D. 1930-Present
III.	Prehistoric Period Themes:	IV. Historic Period Themes:
	Subsistence Settlement  Political Demographic Religion Technology Environmental Adaptation	X Agriculture X Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning Economic (Commercial and Industrial) Government/Law Military Religion Social/Educational/Cultural Transportation
V. R	esource Type:	
	Category: <u>Building</u>	
	Historic Environment: Rural	
	Historic Function(s) and Use(s	): <u>Domestic/Single Family Dwelling</u>
	Known Design Source:	

# Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data

## D-700 - Ralph Farm

Geographic Organization: Eastern Shore

Chronological/Development Period: Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme: Agriculture and Architecture

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Domestic/Single Dwelling

Agriculture-Subsistence/Agricultural Outbuildings

Known Design Source: None

# MARYLAND INVENTORY OF

# Maryland Historical Trust HISTORIC PROPERTIES State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. D-700 Magi No. DOE \_\_yes \_\_no

1. Nam	e (indica	ate preferr	ed name)		
historic Ral	ph Farm, Th	nomas Ball	Home Farm,	Ball Farm	
and/or common	Ralph Farm				
2. Loca	ation				
street & number	4842 Maid	len Forest	Road	-	not for publication
city, town	Vienna		X_ vicinity of	congressional district	
state Maryl	and		county	Dorchester	
3. Clas	sificatio	n			
Category  district building(s) _X structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisit in process being consid xnot_applic	ion Acc <u>X</u> dered	tus occupied unoccupied work in progress essible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use  X agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Pro	perty	(give names a	nd mailing addresse	es of <u>all</u> owners)
name Dori	s B. Ralph				
street & number	None			telephone n	0.:
city, town	ienna		state	and zip code VA	21869
5. Loca	ation of I	Legal D	escription	on	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	Dorches	ter County C	ourthouse	liber RSM-86
street & number		High St	reet		folio 9
city, town	Cambridge			state	MD
6. Repi	esentat	ion in E	Existing	Historical Surv	reys
title					
date				federal stat	te county local
depository for su	rvey records				
city, town				state	

Condition  X excellent	deteriorated	Check one X unaltered	Check one  X original s	ite	
	ruins	altered	moved	date of move	
good		altered	1110464	date of move	
fair	unexposed				

Survey No. D-700

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

7. Description

8. 2	ignificance	Survey No. D-700	Survey No. D-700		
1600 1700	J, F	g landscape architecture law literature military music ent philosophy politics/government	_ religion _ science _ sculpture _ social/ humanitarian _ theater _ transportation _ other (specify)		
Specific	dates Builder/Architect				
check:	Applicable Criteria: _A _B X C _D and/or Applicable Exception: _A _B _C _D				
Prepare			7		
support	both a summary paragraph of significance and	u a general statement of	nistory and		

# **Major Bibliographical References** Survey NoD-700 M-93 Report Jones 1966 Land 1974 Stiverson 1977 Griffing and Lake 1877 **Geographical Data** 10. Acreage of nominated property <u>Approximately</u> 523 acres Rhodesdale Quadrangle scale 1:24000 Quadrangle name **UTM References** do NOT complete UTM references Easting Zone Northing Zone Easting Verbal boundary description and justification Tax Map 56, Parcel 13 List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries state code county code state code county code Form Prepared By name/title Lauren Archibald and Judith Rosentel and Betty C. Zebooker MAAR Associates, Inc. date November 1993 organization P.O. Box 655 telephone(302) 368-5777 street & number Newark state DE city or town The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement. The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and

record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House

21 State Circle Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND INCOME. 1999 DHCP/DHCL 100 COMMUNITY PLACE CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023 -514-7600

7. Des	cription			Survey No. D-700	
condition X excellent	deteriorated	Check one X unaltered	Check one  X original site		
good	ruins	altered	moved date of	move	

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This house, set in farm fields, lies about 1/4 mile off the road. It is a variation of the American four-square type that probably dates from 1900-1920. Features include large dormer windows on three sides of the roof, each with tripartite windows and heavy box cornices with returns. The house's steeply pitched pyramidal roof is covered with grey slate shingles.

The 2 1/2 story house has five bays across the front with a center door and four bays on the sides. The single-level front porch is screened and has a hip roof. One-over-one sash windows throughout the house are flanked by shutters. On the main facade, the house has a screened-in front porch with wood balusters and a hip roof. There is a small sun-porch addition on the west side and a single-story, enclosed porch attached to the rear of the house. The house rests on a brick foundation and is in excellent condition. Two brick chimneys pierce the large dormers on the east and west sides of the house.

The Ralph Farm is accessed by a tree-lined driveway.

#### <u>Outbuildings</u>

Description

\_\_\_ unexposed

\_ fair

There are presently five outbuildings, all situated to the north and northeast of the house. Generally, nearly all of the outbuildings appear to post-date the house. The modern farm office/garage is a long, low structure constructed of corrugated metal (non-contributing). To the north of this is a frame, gable-roofed structure with a lower, corrugated metal section built around it. The small frame structure has a chimney with stove inside, and currently serves as a tool shed. To the north of this is a linear structure covered with corrugated metal, which probably served as an animal barn. This structure has a smaller, lower wing on its south end. Behind the house is a small shed and a screened-in patio/pavilion. Situated some distance southwest of the house is a large brick bakeoven with a brick planter which post-dates the bakeoven. The bakeoven has a central hearth flanked by two lower hearths with iron grills. The bakeoven was probably constructed sometime after the house was built in the twentieth century.

Period	Areas of Significance—C — archeology-prehistoric — archeology-historic — X agriculture — X architecture — art — commerce — communications		landscape architecture law literature military music thus philosophy politics/government	religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation
Specific dates		Builder/Architect		
aı	icable Criteria: _And/or icable Exception:A	<del>_</del> <del>_</del> <del>_</del> _	EFG	
Level	L of Significance:	_nationalstate	<u>X</u> local	

Survey No. D-700

Significance

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The property on which D-700 is located was originally the home farm of Thomas Ball. In 1866, it was conveyed to his daughter, Elizabeth by the Trustee of his estate; and in 1887, Elizabeth Teasdale (nee Ball) and her husband sold the property to Charles T. Ralph. Although Ralph did not purchase the property until 1887, he appears to have occupied the premises for at least a decade prior to the date of purchase. A sign in front of the house says "Ralph Farm est. 1871." The 1877 Lake, Griffing and Stevenson Atlas map of the Vienna area shows him as the occupant of the property in 1877. The property is currently owned by the widow of Charles T. Ralph's son, Walker T. Ralph.

Since the mid-seventeenth century, the economy of the entire Eastern Shore has been based primarily on agriculture. Initially, the economy was based on the cultivation of a single cash crop, tobacco, which was not only the principal commodity of the region but also served as legal tender. The cultivation of tobacco was labor-intensive and highly specialized, requiring extensive hand cultivation. To accommodate tobacco cultivation, early plantations required housing for a large work force consisting primarily of slaves, as well as specialized buildings for the drying and storage of tobacco and wharfs and landings for its shipment abroad (Land 1974; Stiverson 1977).

During the eighteenth century, Eastern Shore planters began substituting the cultivation of tobacco with the cultivation of wheat. Wheat as a cash crop had two major advantages over tobacco. First, the cultivation of wheat was not labor-intensive and required a large work force for only a brief period of time during harvest; second, wheat was easier and cheaper to process for market (Stiverson 1977). During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Eastern Shore of Maryland was one of the principal commercial grain-producing regions of the United States. Wheat cultivation required different specialized buildings such as granaries and mills, as well as barns and stables for the mules, horses or oxen which played an important role in commercial grain farming.

By 1860, Maryland's Eastern Shore was no longer an important grain-producing region, and agriculture became more diversified. Some farms continued to cultivate wheat and corn as feed crops in conjunction with dairy farming, while other farms switched to the commercial cultivation of vegetables, poultry, and fruit. During this period, unsuccessful attempts were also made to cultivate rice, flax and cotton (Jones 1966; Stiverson 1977). As the scientific breeding and feeding of animals to enhance their commercial value was introduced, livestock and poultry were no longer, permitted to range freely. The adoption of these scientific advances in agricultural technology

D-700: Ralph Farm, Dorchester County, Maryland

#### 8. Significance continued

often required the construction of new kinds of highly specialized agricultural buildings such as large dairy barns, silos, and commercial chicken houses, while scientific advances in the technology of preserving and shipping farm produce resulted in the construction of structures such as packing houses, slaughter houses, and canneries.

During the late nineteenth century, farm machinery of various kinds was introduced. The mechanization of various agricultural tasks such as plowing, sowing, reaping, and milking required either the enlargement of existing farm buildings such as barns and stables or the construction of new buildings to accommodate the farm machinery. At the same time, traditional accommodations for teams of horses, mules, and oxen, as well as tack rooms and cart houses became obsolete.

Architectural evidence suggests that the house was erected in the early twentieth century and replaced an earlier house which no longer exists. The agricultural activity represented by the farm buildings and dependencies associated with the Ralph House preserves the cultural integrity of the site as part of a working farm.

The Ralph Farm is significant as a fine local example of an architecturally-intact Colonial Revival period house. The house is interesting for Dorchester County because it exemplifies national trends in residential construction of the time. While its form is essentially box-like, this house is made more elegant by the inclusion of Colonial Revival embellishments. The slate roof shingles are a rarity in rural Dorchester County. Although there are other houses from this period in the county, this is one of the best examples in the unincorporated Vienna area and it retains its original agricultural setting. The property is eligible to the National Register under Criterion C. Further research would be required to evaluate its significance under Criterion D.

Field examination of this house was limited because the owner would not allow access to the property for most of the visits.

# D-700 - Chain of Title (Thomas Ball Home Farm, Ball Farm, Ralph Farm)

NOTE: Ralph Farm as it presently exists is made up of two tracts of land called "Little Chicone Farm" and "Ball Farm" a.k.a. "Thomas Ball Home Farm." D-700 is associated only with the Thomas Ball Farm." The "Little Chicone Farm" tract was not acquired by the Ralph family until 1907 (Deedbook CL-33-181).

#### 29 December 1866

FJH-11-419

Isaac H. Houston, Trustee, Est. of Thomas Ball

Elizabeth Ball, his daughter

Home farm of Thomas J. Ball, "Ball Farm" situated on the County roads from Vienna to Crotcher's Ferry and from Big Mills to Vienna cont. 600 acres more or less.

#### 9 September 1887

CL-6-85

Charles Teasdale and Elizabeth, his wife, nee Ball

to

Charles T. Ralph

Tracts of land comprising "Ball Farm" cont. 600 acres more or less, reserving therefrom the family burying ground as it now exists, Ball and Teasdale families and such servants of said families as may wish to be buried there.

#### 16 March 1904

CL-29-121

Charles T. Ralph

to

George T. Ralph

Half interest in four tracts of land including the Ball Farm lying on the County road leading from Vienna to Crotchers Ferry and from Vienna to Big Mills.

#### 1920

Recited RSM-86-4

Charles T. Ralph died and by LW&T conveyed as life estate to Annie E., his wife, with the right to dispose of as much of the property as was necessary for her support.

#### 14 July 1938

Recited RSM-86-4

Annie E. Ralph died intestate and the property descended to her son, Walker T. Ralph.

#### 31 December 1941

RSM-44-238

George T. Ralph

to

Walter T. Ralph

Undivided half of Ralph farm properties.

#### 10 September 1953

RSM-86-4

Walker T. Ralph

to

Edna M. Wheatley

Land conveyed below and recorded just prior to recording of the deed described below so that Walter T. Ralph's wife's name would appear on the deed.

#### 10 September 1953

RSM-86-9

Edna M. Wheatley, widow

to

Walker T. Ralph and Doris, his wife

Tract #1 - "Little Chicone Farm" cont. 147 1/2 acres

Tract #2 - "Ball Farm"

### D-700: Ralph Farm, Dorchester County, Maryland

## 9.0 Major Bibliographical References continued

#### Jones, Elias

New Revised History of Dorchester County, Maryland.
Tidewater Publishers. Cambridge, Maryland.

#### Lake, Griffing and Stevenson

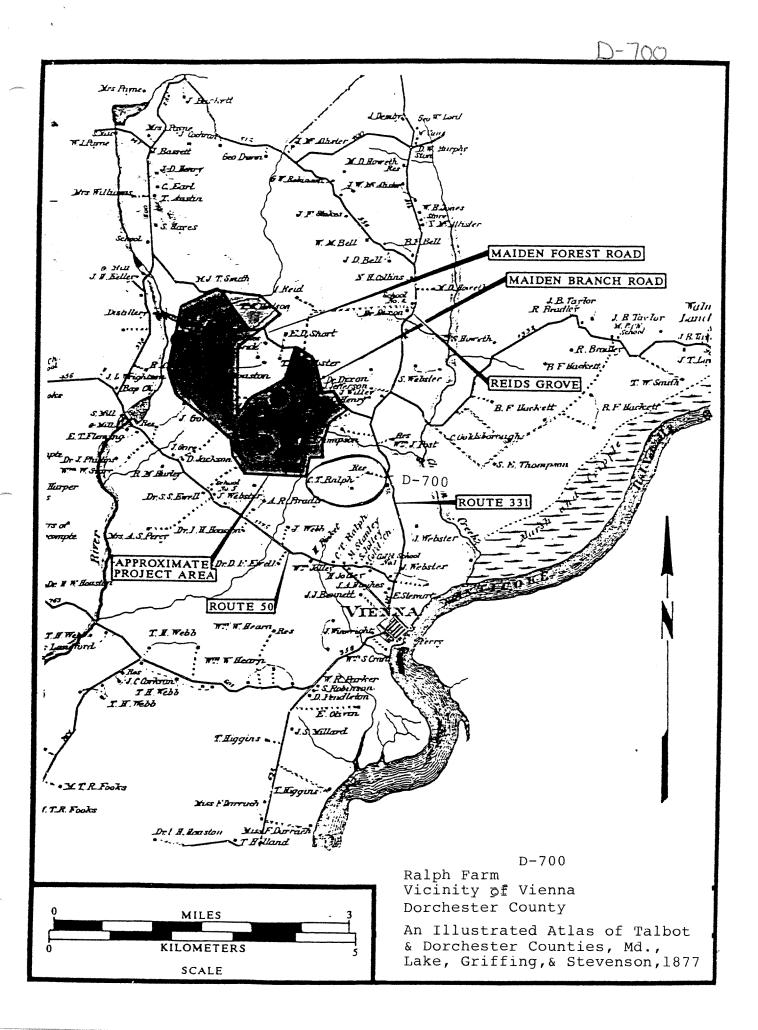
1877 <u>An Illustrated Atlas of Talbot and Dorchester Counties,</u>
<u>Maryland</u>.

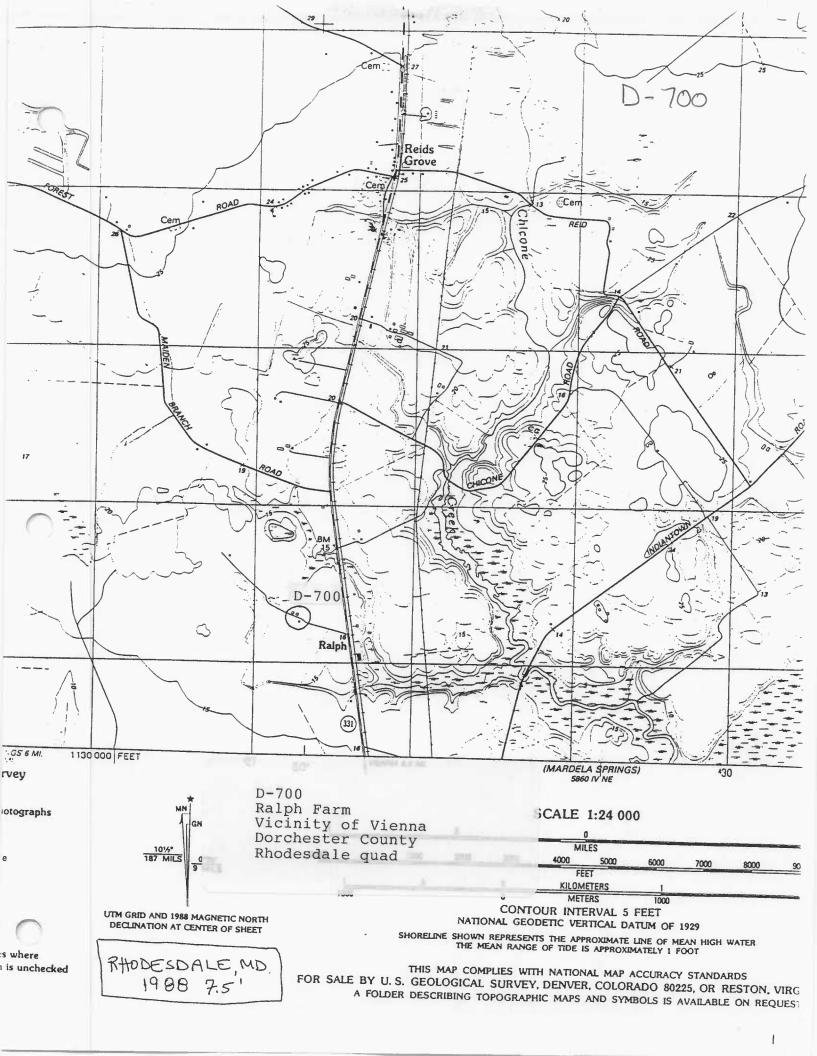
#### Land, Aubrey C.

1974 Provincial Maryland. In <u>Maryland: A History 1632 - 1974</u>. Richard Warsh and William L Fox (eds). Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore Maryland,

#### Stiverson, Gregory A.

1977 <u>Poverty in a Land of Plenty: Tenancy in Eighteenth</u>
<u>Century Maryland.</u> The Johns Hopkins University Press,
Baltimore, Maryland.







ROSENTEL MILLIND SHOO SEPICMBEL 1993 VIEW OF EAST MAIN FACADE OF HOUSE 19/13



D-700 RHLPHFIRL DORCHESTER, MD M. REINBOLD FEBRUARY 1994 MARYLAND SHPO VIEW OF MAIN ELEVATION LOOKING NEST 20/13



D-700 RALPH FARM BORCHEITER, MO L. AYCHIBALD NEN SEPTEMBER 1994 MARYLAND SHOO YIEW of east & SOUTH Elevations Looking to NW 3913



D- 700 TO REAL STEE, MD M. ReINBOLD FEBRUARY 1994 EVALUED OF HOUSE SHOWING COST ON NOTH FACTORS 4913



D-700 70 Rot RALPH FARM DORCHESTER, MD L. ARCHIBALD SEPTEMBER 1394 Overnew OF House SHOW, NG-east + NORTH FACADES 5 \$13



D-700 1. 7 J. RALPH FACM Dorchesea, MD J. Rosenter SEPRMBER 1993 MARY LAND SHOO VIEW OF REAR OF HOUSE (UNST eleuntion) 6913



D-700 RALPH FARM DONCHESTER MD J. ROSENTEL SEPTEMBER 1993 MARY LAND SHPO VIEW TO SOUTH WEST. Near Corner OF House SHOWING ADDITION AND OUTBUILDINGS 70/13



D-700 4 - Roll RALPH FAGM DORCHESTER, MD L. ATHIBAIN September 1994 VIEW OF FARM LANG FROM FRONT OF House Looking Cast 8913



15 - Tx RAIDH FARM SCACKSTER MO J. ROSL NICL SEPTEMBER 1993 MARY LAND SHOO VIEW OF FARMOFFICE/GARage CHON-CONTIN VIEWTO NORTHEAST 9 4 B



5-700 14-71 RALPH FARM DORCHESTER, ND J. ROLLITEL SEPTEMBER 1993 MARYLAND SHAD VICLU OF OUTBUILDING LUOKING NOTTH 10 of 13



1)-700 73-Ral -RALPH FARM DORCHESTER, MD L. ArcHIBALD SEPTLUBER 1994 MARYLAND SHOO VIEW OF OUTBUILDING, LOOKING NW 11 of 13



22-10 D-700 RALPH FARM DORCHESTER, MD L. ATCHIBALD SEPTEMBER 1994 MARYLAND SHOO VIEW OF SCHENED-IN PATRO/PAULLION & SHED LOOKING EAST 12913



3-11 5-700 RMPH FARM DORCHESTER, MD L. ARCHIBALD SEPTEMBER 1994 MARYLAND SHOO YIEW TO SW OF RAKEOURN & PLANTER 13913